

Abstract of the Disclosure

A character region detecting unit detects
respective character regions in a plurality of
5 document images which are partitioned and read. A
character recognizing unit recognizes the characters
within the detected character regions, and converts
them into character codes. An overlapping position
detecting unit detects the positions of line images
10 whose matching degrees are high as an overlapping
position by making a comparison between the positions
and the sizes of the character regions in the two
document images. An image merging unit merges the two
document images at the detected overlapping position.

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